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EXAMINER

DODDS, HAROLD E

| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|----------|--------------|
|----------|--------------|

2177

DATE MAILED: 03/03/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/419,327

Applicant(s)

JENKINS, STEVEN R.

Examiner

Harold E. Dodds, Jr.

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 December 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 15 October 1999 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

37 CFR 1.132 Declaration

1. The Declaration under 37 CFR 1.132 filed 19 December 2002 is sufficient to overcome the rejection of claims 1-18 based upon Teare et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,151,624). The Teare reference has been replaced by Boden et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,930,512).

Drawings

2. In order to avoid abandonment, the drawing informalities noted in Paper No. 5, mailed on 15 January 2002, must now be corrected. Correction can only be effected in the manner set forth in the above noted paper.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1, 7, and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,930,512), Seybold (U.S. Patent No. 5,877,758), Robinson (U.S. Patent No. 5,918,014), and Bowen et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,094,049).

5. Boden rendered obvious independent claim 1 by the following:
"...logging on..." at col. 1, lines 46-49.
"...configuring an appearance..." at col. 13, lines 7-9 and col. 13, lines 26-28.

"...viewing, adding, or modifying items of information..." at col. 23, lines 58-67, col. 24, lines 1-5, and col. 16, lines 4-7.

"...pertaining to one or more clients..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...specifying identifying information for a client..." at col. 7, lines 44-49 and col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...specifying information..." at col. 7, lines 44-49.

"...of the client..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...conceptually links a plurality of related items..." at col. 21, lines 66-67, col. 22, lines 1-3, and col. 13, lines 30-33.

"...and the specified information is applicable to each of the plurality of items..." at col. 7, lines 44-47, col. 19, lines 1-5, and col. 13, lines 30-33.

"...of the client..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...identifying a user group having some level of authorization..." at col. 7, lines 44-47, col. 4, lines 66-67, and col. 15, lines 1-3.

"... viewing, adding, or modifying further comprises..." at col. 23, lines 58-67, col. 24, lines 1-5, and col. 16, lines 4-7.

"...selecting a client..." at col. 5, lines 25-26 and col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...in connection with the selected client..." at col. 5, lines 25-26 and col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...for the selected client..." at col. 5, lines 25-26 and col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...selecting a user..." at col. 5, lines 25-26 and col. 5, lines 8-18.

"...displaying only items for which the selected user has been designated..." at col. 13, lines 26-28 and col. 7, lines 44-47.

"...configuring and said viewing, adding, or modifying..." at col. 13, lines 7-9, col. 23, lines 58-67, col. 24, lines 1-5, and col. 16, lines 4-7.

"...performed via an Internet web site.." at col. 23, lines 58-67 and col. 24, lines 1-5.

Boden does not teach the use of collaborative management applications, the use of clients, the use of user groups, the use of levels of authorization, the use of components, the use of categories, the use of groups of matters, and the use of filters.

6. However, Seybold teaches the use of collaborative management applications as follows:

"...to the collaborative management application..." at col. 6, lines 63-66.

"...of the collaborative management application..." at col. 6, lines 63-66.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use a collaborative management application to consolidate, coordinate, and track team activity.

Seybold does not teach the use of subject matters, the use of levels of authorization, the use of components, the use of categories, the use of groups of matters, and the use of filters.

7. However, Robinson teaches the use of subject matter groups, categories, and filters as follows:

"...for at least one matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...wherein the at least one matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...selecting one or more matters..." col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...one or more matters comprise a group of matters..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...with the selected group of matters..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...selecting a filter for filtering items..." at col. 4, lines 25-27.

"...matters..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...in connection with all matters..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...displaying the filtered items to a user..." at col. 19, lines 18-23.

"...specifying at least one category..." at col. 7, lines 7-11

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use matters and groups of matters and categories for organizing information and to have the use of filters to exclude information outside of these filters in order to provide for convenience and to be able to have a manageable set of data for viewing.

Robinson does not teach the use of components.

8. However, Bowen teaches the use of components as follows:

"...selecting a component..." at col. 7, lines 52-53.

"...for the component..." at col. 7, lines 52-53.

"...selecting a component in connection..." at col. 7, lines 52-53.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use components as well as groups of matters and categories for organizing information for the convenience of the user.

9. As per claim 7, the "...assigning an authorization level to each user of the user group..." is taught by Boden at col. 4, lines 66-67, col. 5, lines 1-3, and col. 7, lines 44-47.

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10. As per claim 8, the "...modifying the authorization level of a user of the user group...", is taught by Boden at col. 4, lines 66-67, col. 5, lines 1-3, and col. 7, lines 44-47, the "...in connection with at least one matter...", is taught by Robinson at col. 5, lines 32-33, and the "...of the client...", is taught by Boden at col. 10, lines 18-20.

11. Claims 2-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, Robinson, and Bowen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Evans et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,784,6191) and Gore (U.S. Patent No. 5,873,095).

As per claim 2, the "...adding an item to a component"...and "...specifying a status of said added item...", are not taught by either Boden, Seybold, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Evans teaches the adding of items to components as follows:

"...an item may be added to a notebook component by dragging it directly into a notebook window from any system component, such as a network browser, in accordance with the embedding procedure described herein..." at col. 16, lines 5-9.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to add items to components in order to provide flexibility in the system for the convenience of the user.

Evan did not teach the specifying of a status for the added items.

However, Gore teaches the setting of a status as follows:

"...Locator application 22 provides a user with the ability to set his current status, to view the current status of another

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employee, and to view a list of employees having a given status..." at col. 2, lines 57-60.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to assign statuses to added items in order to provide flexibility in the system for the convenience of the user.

As per claim 3, the "...changing a status of said added item..." is not taught by either Boden, Seybold, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Gore teaches the changing of a status as follows:

"...To change his current status using status window application 24, the employee can select and change status icon 102 until status icon 102 corresponds to the desired status..." at col. 6, lines 51-53.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to change statuses of items in order to provide flexibility in the system for the convenience of the user.

As per claim 4, "...changing a status of said added item comprises selecting an icon associated with said item status..." is not taught by either Boden, Seybold, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Gore teaches the use of icons for changing of a status as follows:

"...To change his current status using status window application 24, the employee can select and change status icon 102 until status icon 102 corresponds to the desired status..." at col. 6, lines 51-53.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to use icons for changing statuses of items for the convenience of the user.

As per claim 5, the "...selecting an item status and displaying only items having a status corresponding to the selected item status..." is not taught by either Boden, Seybold, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Gore teaches the displaying of items having a selected status as follows:

"...If a list is desired, then, in step 88, the locator application queries the database and displays a list of employees having a status matching the queried status..." at col. 6, lines 6-9.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to specify a status and to obtaining a list of items having the specified status for the convenience of the user.

12. Claims 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, Robinson, Bowen, Evans, and Gore as applied to claim 2 above, and further in view of Vaughn (U.S. Patent No. 4,800,590) and Lindholm (U.S. Patent No. 6,108,754).

As per claim 12, the "...item status is selected from a group consisting of hot issue, in progress, and done..." is not taught by either Boden, Seybold, Robinson, Bowen, Evans, or Gore.

However, Vaughn teaches the use of the concept "hot Issue" as follows:

The problem of computer security has become a very hot issue recently, with the movie "War Games" and the problems with "hackers" finding their way into time-shared computer systems..." at col. 1, lines 51-54.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to specify the status of an issue as "hot issue" in order to indicate that immediate action is required.

Vaughn does not teach the use of statuses of in-progress or done.

However, Lindholm teaches the use of statuses of in-progress or done as follows:

"...The garbage collector would have done so because it had determined that, except for the in-progress reference being set to refer to the object, the synchronization construct meets the termination criteria..." at col. 18, lines 23-27.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to specify the status of an issue as "in progress" or "done" as well as "hot issue" in order to indicate the progress of processing issues.

13. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, Robinson, and Bowen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Graham et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,044,138), Gabbe et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,550,965), Sanschagrín et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,295,540), and Smalley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,067,549).

As per claim 6, the "...group consisting of a status component...",
the "...an outside service provider notes...",
the "...a client notes...",
the "...a checklist...",
the "...critical dates..."

the "...only users identified as outside service provider users can modify outside service provider notes items....,"

and the "...only users identified as client users can modify client notes items....," are not taught by either Boden, Seybold, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Graham teaches the use of outside service provider notes as follows:

"...Upon selection of the client, the means 60 is initiated and a screen is displayed permitting or requesting the service provider to enter comments to be associated with the matter/call..." at col. 6, lines 63-66.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to allow outside service providers to enter comments for convenience and the allow modification of those comments by the same outside service providers in order to maintain integrity of these comments.

Graham does not teach the use of client notes, statuses, checklists, and critical dates.

However, Gabbe teaches the use of client notes as follows:

"...The annotating process in block 506 accepts client notes 514, event data 106, media representations 202, and the table of contents 302 as input. Client notes 514 are ancillary data 530 which is entered by manually typing characters into the keyboard or by semi-automatically highlighting a textual entry with a pointing device..." at col. 13, lines 45-50.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to allow clients to enter comments for convenience and the allow modification of those comments by the same clients in order to maintain integrity of these comments.

Graham does not teach the use of statuses, checklists, and critical dates.

However, Sanschagrin teaches the use of statuses and critical dates as follows:

"...The inventory information or equivalent that can be retrieved from INM 11 include, for example, location/relay rack terminal identification (TID) information, hierarchy human equipment catalogue inventory group (HECIG) information, plug-in type information such as human equipment catalogue items (HECI), slot ID, and NE assignment status (in-service or not in-service)..." at col. 4, lines 54-60.

"...The TIRKS system allows users to automatically log, route, and monitor the progress of work orders (WO), perform end-to-end circuit design based on generic specifications and automated scripts, view and maintain an accurate, up-to-date inventory of all facilities and equipment and their assignments, execute interactive, user-defined queries and generate customized reports of work center activity, critical dates, and jeopardy conditions, and interface seamlessly with other Bellcore operations support systems..." at col. 1, lines 31-40.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use statuses and critical dates as components for convenience.

Sanschagrin does not teach the use of checklists.

However, Smalley teaches the use of checklists as follows:

"...This greatly expanded complement of shared software and data tables includes, in addition to the features of the regulated entity master file system 20, joint-usage capabilities for definition and description of the subject items comprising a regulated entity; data file creation and access; work activity scheduling and tracking; permit development; creation of inspection checklists and recording of inspection results; data entry of sample analysis results from environmental monitoring; automated determination of exceedances of pollution limits; automated determination of delinquent submittals and actions; preparation of enforcement documents; fee assessment; and billing...." at col. 7, lines 56-67.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use checklists as components for convenience.

14. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, Robinson, and Bowen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Hunt et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,253,234).

As per claim 9, the "...Internet web site..." is taught by Boden at col. 23, lines 58-67 and col. 24, lines 1-5,
the "...group consisting of the client..." is taught by Boden at col. 8, lines 12-14 and col. 10, lines 18-20,
but the "...is maintained by a party selected from the group consisting...and an outside service provider..." is not taught by either Boden, Seybold, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Hunt teaches the maintaining of Internet web sites by service providers as follows:

"...Another problem relates to the fees charged by service providers for maintaining a Web site..." at col. 2, lines 35-36.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use either clients or service providers of these clients to maintain Internet Web sites in order to promote system flexibility and convenience.

15. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, Robinson, and Bowen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Yianilos et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,321,609).

As per claim 10, the "...filter corresponds to a time period and wherein the filtered items comprise items edited during the time period corresponding to the filter... is not taught by Boden, Seybold, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Yianilos teaches the use of a filter for a time period as follows:

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"...In order to enable a useful selection of relevant articles, these filter parameters are set forth in four Groups, namely, "Article Type", "Location", "Subject", and "Time Period."..., " at col. 2, lines 7-10.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use time period filters to include only information inside of these time periods in order to provide for convenience and to be able to have a manageable set of data for viewing.

16. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, Robinson, Bowen, and Yianilos as applied to claim 10 above, and further in view of Leon et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,317,025).

As per claim 11, the "...filtered items comprise all items added to the component since the items were last viewed..." is not taught by Boden, Seybold, Huang, Robinson, Bowen, or Yianilos.

However, Leon teaches the use of items entered after a time as follows:

"...These defaults are automatically included when the items are added to the data base..." at col. 21, lines 38-39.

"...Get new number of seconds to lock out keypad less than 12 hours (keypad lockout means the keypad is disabled and cannot be used until reenabled after a preset programmed elapsed time period, the lockout occurring in response to entering of invalid login, for example)..." at col. 12, lines 22-26.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use time period filters to include only information after these time periods in order to provide for convenience and to be able to have a manageable set of data for viewing.

17. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, Robinson, and Bowen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Evans and Weiser (U.S. Patent No. 5,920,404).

As per claim 13, the "...designating a user..." is taught by Boden at col. 5, lines 25-26 and col. 5, lines 8-18, the "...adding an item to a component..." and "...automatically generating an E-mail..." are not taught by Boden, Seybold, Huang, Robinson, and Bowen.

However, Evans teaches the adding of items to components as follows:

"...an item may be added to a notebook component by dragging it directly into a notebook window from any system component, such as a network browser, in accordance with the embedding procedure described herein..." at col. 16, lines 5-9.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to add items to components in order to provide flexibility in the system for the convenience of the user.

Evans does not teach the automatic generation of an E-mail message.

However, Weiser teaches the automatic generation of an E-mail message as follows:

"...Document routing module 64 can then generate and communicate an e-mail message containing the location of the file to the user identified in the communications field via e-mail translation service 66..." at col. 8, lines, 12-15.

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It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to automatically generate E-mail notices and to send them to designated users in order to notify the users of changes to pending items.

18. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boden, Seybold, Robinson, and Bowen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Horvitz et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,864,848), Weiser, and Shaw et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,199,106).

As per claim 14, the "...user selection of an E-mail icon associated with one of the displayed items....,"
the "...displaying at least one E-mail group for the selected client, the at least one E-mail group comprising a list of users for receiving E-mail messages....,"
the "...sending the E-mail message to the selected users....,"
the "...collaborative management application automatically filling in a subject field of the E-mail message with a description of the associated item....," are not taught by either Boden, Seybold, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Horvitz teaches the use of icons for E-mail messages as follows:

"...At a convenient point in time for reading e-mail, the user may select an e-mail icon on a menu bar to activate the e-mail program 36..." at col. 19, lines 41-43.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to use icons for activating E-mail programs for the convenience of the user.

Horvitz does not teach the use of lists of E-mail message users or the automatic filling in of the E-mail subject.

However, Weiser teaches the automatic generation of an E-mail message as follows:

"...Document routing module 64 can then generate and communicate an e-mail message containing the location of the file to the user identified in the communications field via e-mail translation service 66..." at col. 8, lines, 12-15.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to provide the user with the means of selecting a set of E-mail recipients from a list of E-mail addresses and sending an E-mail message to the designated recipients for user convenience.

Weiser does not teach the automatically filling in the subject field on an E-mail message.

However, Shaw teaches the automatically filling in the subject field on an E-mail message as follows:

"...If "mail <recipient e-mail > <subject line>" is defined as the action to be performed, the client computer switches to the "write" screen, automatically filling in the address and the subject of an e-mail message..." at col. 16, lines 30-33.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to automatically fill in the subject field on an E-mail message in order to provide a set of uniform subject field entries for the E-mail messages.

19. Claims 15-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Clements (U.S. Patent No. 6,182,080), Hunt, Boden, and Robinson.

20. Clements rendered obvious independent claim 15 by the following:

"...instructions for accessing a repository..." at col. 6, lines 12-16 and col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...the repository for storing a plurality of documents..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...a first graphical interface ..." at col. 4, lines 47-51.

"...by which a first user..." at col. 5, lines 1-2.

"...can add one or more documents to the repository..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...for each document..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...a plurality of related documents..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...is applicable to each of the plurality of documents..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...instructions..." at col. 6, lines 12-16.

"...one or more users..." at col. 5, lines 1-2.

"...an email interface..." at col. 3, lines 16-18.

"...linked to the first graphical interface..." at col. 4, lines 47-51.

"...the email interface including a list of potential email recipients..." at col. 3, lines 16-18.

"...a second graphical interface..." at col. 4, lines 47-51.

"...by which a second user..." at col. 5, lines 1-2.

"...and can access one or more of the documents in the repository..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...for the one or more documents..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...and instructions..." at col. 6, lines 12-16.

"...for allowing the second user..." at col. 5, lines 1-2.

"...any one of the documents in the repository..." at col. 2, lines 25-29.

"...of the second user..." at col. 5, lines 1-2.

Clements does not teach the use of service providers, the use of categories, the use of authorizations, the use of matters, the use of clients, the logging on to network applications, and the viewing, adding, or modifying documents.

21. However, Hunt teaches the use of service providers and the use of network application programs as follows:

"...associated with the service provider..." at col. 4, lines 11-13.

"...the network application..." at col. 4, lines 13-16.

"...the network application..." at col. 4, lines 13-16.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use service providers to maintain Internet Web sites in order to promote system flexibility and convenience for the users. Likewise, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to allow users to use network application programs in order to make maximum use of the networks' capabilities.

Hunt does not teach the use of categories, the use of authorizations, the use of matters, the use of clients, the logging on to applications, and the viewing, adding, or modifying documents.

22. However, Boden teaches the use of categories, the use of authorizations, the use of clients, the logging on to applications and the viewing, adding, or modifying documents as follows:

"...can log into..." at col. 1, lines 46-49.

"...and can assign a category, and authorization..." at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

"...wherein the matter conceptually links..." at col. 21, lines 66-67 and col. 22, lines 1-3.

"...for identifying one or more clients..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...each client comprising..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...having a level of authorization..." at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

"...of the client..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...selected according to at least one client..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...the category..." at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

"...associated with a client..." at col. 10, lines 18-20.

"...can log into..." at col. 12, lines 21-23.

"...based on the category..." at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

"...authorization..." at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

"...to view, add, or modify..." at col. 12, lines 56-61 and col. 17, lines 44-47.

"...according to the authorization..." at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to log on to network applications and to use these applications to view, add, or modify documents in order to provide users access to these applications and have the capability to view, add, or modify documents residing on a system at a remote site to gain acceptance for use of this system. Likewise, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use

authorization and categories of subjects in order to designate the system use privileges of each of the users and exclude other user from accessing these categories.

Boden does not teach the use of matters.

23. However, Robinson teaches the use of matters as follows:

"...and a matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...and information associated with the matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...with respect to matters..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...and the matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...and matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

"...with respect to a particular matter..." at col. 5, lines 32-33.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use matters for organizing information.

24. As per claim 16, the "...the second graphical interface..." is taught by Clements at col. 4, lines 47-51,
the "...includes instructions..." is taught by Clements at col. 6, lines 12-16,
the "...for allowing the second user..." is taught by Clements at col. 5, lines 1-2,
the "...to view, add, or modify..." is taught by Boden at col. 23, lines 58-67, col. 24, lines 1-5, and col. 16, lines 4-7,
the "...any one of the documents in the repository by..." is taught by Clements at col. 2, lines 25-29,
the "...using a first filter for filtering items..." is taught by Robinson at col. 4, lines 25-27,
the "...for the client..." is taught by Boden at col. 10, lines 18-20,

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the "...and the matter..." is taught by Robinson at col. 5, lines 32-33,

the "...and using a second filter for filtering items..." is taught by Robinson at col. 4, lines 25-27,

the "...for which the second user..." is taught by Clements at col. 5, lines 1-2,

and the "...has authorization..." is taught by Boden at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3.

25. As per claim 17, the "...the list of potential email recipients..." is taught by Clements at col. 3, lines 16-18,

the "...is selected according to the client..." is taught by Smith at col. 11, lines 56-59,

the "...the category..." is taught by Boden at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3,

and the "...and the matter..." is taught by Robinson at col. 5, lines 32-33.

26. As per claim 18, the "...the service provider..." is taught by Hunt at col. 4, lines 11-13

and the "...is a law firm..." is taught by Smith at col. 11, lines 56-59.

Response to Arguments

27. Applicant's arguments filed 13 December 2002 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. In the first argument for independent claim 1 on page 3, paragraph 6, the Applicant states as follows:

"Claim 1, as amended, recites specifying information for at least one matter of the client, wherein the matter conceptually links a plurality of related items and the specified information is applicable to each of the items. Nowhere do the cited references teach or suggest such an element."

The phrase is rendered obvious by a combination of teachings of Robinson and Boden. Robinson teaches "specifying information for at least one matter" at col. 5, lines

32-33 and "wherein the matter" at col. 5, lines 32-33 and Boden teaches "of the client" at col. 10, lines 18-20 and "links a plurality of related items and the specified information is applicable to each of the items" at col. 21, lines 66-67, col. 22, lines 1-3, and col. 13, lines 30-33. It is clear, the combination of the teachings of Robinson and Boden renders obvious this phrase.

28. In the second argument for independent claim 1 on page 4, paragraph 1, the Applicant states as follows:

"For example, the Office action cites col. 4, lines 39-41 of Teare to render obvious the element of "configuring an appearance." However, the actual language of the cited text in Teare refers to configuring a system "in a way that provides distributed storage of the real name information." Configuring a system to provide distributed storage of the real name information does not teach or suggest configuring an appearance."

Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 1 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. The Teare reference has been replaced by the Boden reference. Boden teaches the configuring an appearance at col. 13, lines 7-9 and col. 13, lines 26-28. Likewise, arguments in paragraphs 2-4 on page 4 have become moot due the replacement of the Boden reference for the Teare reference.

29. In the third argument for independent claim 1 on page 5, paragraph 2, the Applicant states as follows:

"Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the combination of Teare, Seybold, Smith, Huang, Robinson, and Bowen is improper. According to MPEP § 2143.01, obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either explicitly or implicitly in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. *In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680, 16 USPQ2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990)."

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Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 1 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. The combination of the Teare, Seybold, Smith, Huang, Robinson, and Bowen references has been replaced with a combination of Boden, Seybold, Robinson, and Bowen references. Furthermore, the Boden, Seybold, Robinson, and Bowen references come from related technologies. Boden, Seybold, Robinson, and Bowen teach the use of computers, the use of networks, the viewing and updating of data, the use of information, the use of users of the system, and the use of applications and Boden, Robinson, and Bowen teach the use of databases and the use of logging on. It is clear, that the references of Boden, Seybold, Robinson, and Bowen use similar technologies.

30. In the fourth argument for independent claim 1 on page 6, paragraph 2, the Applicant states as follows:

"It is also clear that a rejection cannot be predicated on the mere identification of individual components of claimed limitations. Rather, particular findings must be made as to the reason the skilled artisan, with no knowledge of the claimed invention, would have selected these components for combination in the manner claimed. *Ecolochem Inc. v. Southern California Edison*, 56 USPQ2d 1065, 1076 (Fed. Cir. 2000). Here, no such evidence has been presented."

In response to applicant's arguments against the references individually, one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986).

31. In the fifth argument for independent claim 1 on page 6, paragraph 3, the Applicant states as follows:

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"The Office action cannot simply take bits and pieces of information from a reference, much less multiple references, and piece them together like a jigsaw puzzle to render a disclosed invention obvious. The case law makes it clear that the best defense against hindsight-based obviousness analysis is the rigorous application of the requirement for a showing of a teaching or motivation to combine the prior art references. See *Dembiczak*, 50 USPQ2d, 1614, 1617 (Fed. Cir. 1999). "Combining prior art references without evidence of such a suggestion, teaching, or motivation simply takes the inventor's disclosure as a blueprint for piecing together the prior art to defeat patentability - the essence of hindsight." *Id.* It is respectfully submitted that the only way the cited references could be pieced together to defeat patentability is indeed to use Applicant's disclosure as a blueprint."

In response to applicant's argument that the examiner's conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning, it must be recognized that any judgment on obviousness is in a sense necessarily a reconstruction based upon hindsight reasoning. But so long as it takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper. See *In re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971).

32. In the sixth argument for claims 7 and 8 on page 7, paragraph 5, the Applicant states as follows:

"Claims 7 and 8 depend from and further limit claim 1 and therefore are allowable for at least that reason."

Since the responses to the first through the fifth arguments render obvious independent claim 1 the same responses render obvious claims 7 and 8, which depend on the same technology as independent claim 1.

33. In the seventh argument for claims 2-6 and 9-14 on page 7, paragraph 5 and page 8, paragraph 1, the Applicant states as follows:

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"Claims 2-6 and 9-14 stand rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over various combinations of Teare, Seybold, Smith, Huang, Robinson, and Bowen in view of other cited references. However, as claims 2-6 and 9-14 depend from and further limit claim 1, claims 2-6 and 9-14 are allowable for at least that reason."

Since the responses to the first through the fifth arguments render obvious independent claim 1 and no additional arguments have been made on additional technologies used for claims 2-6 and 9-14 the same responses render obvious claims 2-6 and 9-14, which depend on the same technology as independent claim 1.

34. In the eighth argument for independent claim 15 on page 8, paragraph 3, the Applicant states as follows:

"Claim 15, as amended, recites instructions for accessing a repository, where the repository is for storing a plurality of documents. A first graphical interface enables a first user associated with a service provider to log into a network application, add one or more documents to the repository, and assign a category, an authorization, and a matter for each document. The matter conceptually links a plurality of related documents and information associated with the matter is applicable to each of the plurality of documents."

These phrases are rendered obvious by a combination of the teachings of Clements, Hunt, Boden, and Robinson. Clements teaches "a first graphical interface enables a first user" at col. 4, lines 47-51 and col. 5, lines 1-2, "add one or more documents to the repository" at col. 2, lines 25-29, "for each document" at col. 2, lines 25-29, "a plurality of related documents and information" at col. 2, lines 25-29, and "is applicable to each of the plurality of documents" at col. 2, lines 25-29; Hunt teaches "associated with a service provider" at col. 4, lines 11-13 and "a network application" at col. 4, lines 13-16; Boden teaches "to log into" at col. 1, lines 46-49 and "and assign a category, an authorization" at col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-3, and "conceptually links" at col. 21, lines 66-67 and col. 22, lines 1-3; and Robinson teaches "and a matter" at col. 5,

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lines 32-33, "the matter" at col. 5, lines 32-33, and "associated with the matter" at col. 5, lines 32-33. It is clear that the combination of teachings of Clements, Hunt, Boden, and Robinson renders obvious these phrases from independent claim 15.

35. In the ninth argument for independent claim 15 on page 8, paragraph 4, the Applicant states as follows:

"Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the combination of Teare, Smith, Clements, Hunt, and Boden is improper. As stated previously, according to MPEP § 2143.01, obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either explicitly or implicitly in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. *In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680, 16 USPQ2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990)."

Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 15 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. The combination of the Teare, Smith, Clements, Hunt, and Boden references has been replaced with a combination of Clements, Hunt, Boden, and Robinson references. Furthermore, the Clements, Hunt, Boden, and Robinson references come from related technologies. Clements, Hunt, Boden, and Robinson teach the use of computers, the use of databases, the use of networks, the updating of data, the use of information, the use of users of the system, and the use of applications and Clements, Boden, and Robinson teach the viewing of data, the use of categories, and the use of documents. It is clear, that the Clements, Hunt, Boden, and Robinson references use similar technologies.

36. In the tenth argument for independent claim 15 on page 9, paragraph 7, the Applicant states as follows:

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"It is also clear that a rejection cannot be predicated on the mere identification of individual components of claimed limitations. Rather, particular findings must be made as to the reason the skilled artisan, with no knowledge of the claimed invention, would have selected these components for combination in the manner claimed. *Ecolochem Inc. v. Southern California Edison*, 56 USPQ2d 1065, 1076 (Fed. Cir. 2000)."

In response to applicant's arguments against the references individually, one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986).

37. In the eleventh argument for independent claim 15 on page 10, paragraph 2, the Applicant states as follows:

"The case law makes it clear that the best defense against hindsight-based obviousness analysis is the rigorous application of the requirement for a showing of a teaching or motivation to combine the prior art references. See *Dembiczak*, 50 USPQ2d, 1614, 1617 (Fed. Cir. 1999). "Combining prior art references without evidence of such a suggestion, teaching, or motivation simply takes the inventor's disclosure as a blueprint for piecing together the prior art to defeat patentability - the essence of hindsight." *Id.* It is respectfully submitted that the only way the cited references could be pieced together to defeat patentability is indeed to use Applicant's disclosure as a blueprint."

In response to applicant's argument that the examiner's conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning, it must be recognized that any judgment on obviousness is in a sense necessarily a reconstruction based upon hindsight reasoning. But so long as it takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper. See *In re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971).

38. In the twelfth argument for claims 16-18 on page 11, paragraph 2, the Applicant states as follows:

"Claims 16-18 depend from and further limit claim 15 and therefore are allowable for at least that reason."

Since the responses to the eighth through the eleventh arguments render obvious independent claim 15 the same responses render obvious claims 16-18, which depend on the same technology as independent claim 15.

Conclusion

39. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

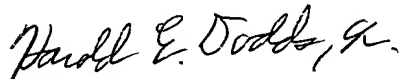
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

40. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Harold E. Dodds, Jr. whose telephone number is (703)-305-1802. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 8:00 - 4:30.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John E. Breene can be reached on (703)-305-9790. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 746-7239 for regular communications and 703-746-7238 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)-305-3900.



Harold E. Dodds, Jr.
Patent Examiner
February 26, 2003


GRETA ROBINSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER